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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DAKAR 000932

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STATE FOR AF, AF/W, AF/RSA AND NEA/IR
NSC FOR AF SENIOR DIRECTOR COURVILLE
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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR JACOBS PRESENTS HER CREDENTIALS TO
PRESIDENT WADE

REF: JACKSON-FRAZER E-MAIL OF APRIL 14 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Ambassador Janice L. Jacobs for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During my 30-minute meeting with President Abdoulaye Wade on April 14, we discussed the strong bilateral relationship, U.S. assistance to Senegal, his upcoming visit to Iran, Senegal,s Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) proposal, counter-terrorism, conflict resolution, the Casamance peace process, peacekeeping, health, education and the investment climate. Wade expressed interest in an official working visit. He spent longer with me than with most new ambassadors and said that his door is open. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) In a colorful ceremony filled with pomp, I presented my credentials and Ambassador Richard Roth,s letter of recall to President Abdoulaye Wade on April 14. Wade and I spent 30 minutes one-on-one discussing bilateral, regional and international issues. Our meeting was longer than his meetings with the new South Korean, Venezuelan and Thai Ambassadors, who also presented their credentials on April 14.

¶3. (C) President Wade warmly welcomed me to the Presidential Palace and emphasized the strong ties that bind our two countries. He said he is proud of his relationship with President Bush and hopes that he may be invited for an official working visit. I responded that we share mutual interests, including counter-terrorism and conflict resolution. When I thanked him for Senegal,s peacekeeping efforts, he said he is very pleased with Senegal,s contributions.

U.S. ASSISTANCE

¶4. (SBU) Summarizing our cooperation, I noted that the United States has provided USD 204 million in assistance since 1998, including USD 40 million in FY-2005. I also mentioned the President,s Malaria Initiative (PMI) of which Wade was already aware and extremely appreciative. Wade invited me to see how U.S., Senegalese and other donor efforts are promoting health and education, which he said is &the answer.8 I told him that I planned to start visiting some of our aid projects this month; he suggested that I might accompany Mrs. Wade on some of her trips around Senegal. He also asked for U.S. help in attracting businesses to Senegal.

CASAMANCE

15. (C) I asked Wade about the humanitarian situation resulting from the fighting in northern Guinea-Bissau, specifically asking if there is anything the United States can do. Wade stressed that the GOGB had decided to oust Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) Atika leader Salif Sadio and his supporters. He noted that a heavily mined border isolates Guinea-Bissau. He hoped that Sadio will join the peace process, and he said that he has asked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to see the prisoners taken by the Bissau-Guinean Army. Wade said the most useful U.S. contribution would be road construction and demining, which the United States is already examining. (COMMENT: The GOGB announced shortly after my meeting that Sadio's headquarters had been captured. END COMMENT.)

IRAN

16. (C) Shifting to international conflicts, Wade said that he had asked Senior Minister for Foreign Affairs Cheikh Tidiane Gadio to travel to Washington to inform us that Wade has accepted an invitation to visit Tehran beginning on April 16 (Ref). Wade related that he had been invited by both the former and current Iranian Presidents. He stated that he is interested in mediating between Iran and the U.S. -- but only if he can be successful. I told Wade that the U.S. is promoting a diplomatic solution but strongly opposes Iranian development of nuclear weapons. I also noted that Russia and others have tried to mediate. Wade, however, seems to believe that he might be more successful because he is Muslim.

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COMMENT

17. (C) President Wade mentioned the &strong bilateral relationship8 three times during our conversation. He is clearly interested in an official visit to the White House and seemed sincere about his door being open. END COMMENT.
JACOBS